



For Immediate Release:

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COMMON COUNCIL APPROVES STORMWATER USER FEE

***Dedicated revenue source to fund state and federal water quality regulations,
community-wide improvement projects***

LAFAYETTE—The Lafayette Common Council voted in favor of a user fee to fund a city-wide multi-year stormwater capital improvement program estimated at \$15,000,000. The user fee, which will be effective January 1, 2010, will establish a dedicated revenue source for state and federally regulated stormwater activities, annual system operations and maintenance as well as nine long-anticipated capital projects to improve stormwater water quality and reduce flooding.

“Polluted stormwater and combined sewer overflows around the country have had a very negative impact on the water quality of streams and rivers nationwide,” Mayor Tony Roswarski said. “As a result, Lafayette and other communities are being held accountable. We’re establishing dedicated funding to meet these regulations, and more importantly, to improve the health of our community and our neighborhoods.”

When rain or snow falls in Lafayette, the precipitation runs off impervious surfaces such as roofs, driveways, streets and parking lots into the stormwater drainage system. The stormwater, which may be polluted with chemicals, litter, and sediment, flows from the storm sewer directly into local streams and rivers. With little or no treatment, polluted stormwater creates unhealthy conditions for human and aquatic life.

“The city currently operates a stormwater program, but a dedicated funding source does not exist,” Jenny Miller, Lafayette City Engineer said. “Permit mandates and ongoing operational and maintenance activities of the storm sewer system were funded by the Department of Water Pollution Control in the past, but funding is no longer available for both programs.”

In 2010 and moving forward, 100 percent of Water Pollution Control revenue will be required to fund the city’s mandated 20-year, \$179 million Combined Sewer Overflow Long Term Control Plan to reduce raw sewage overflows into the Wabash River and other local waterways. The department does not have adequate funds to finance the LTCP, sanitary sewer operations and maintenance, and a stormwater program.

(more)

Stormwater runoff from properties—residential and non-residential—enters the city’s storm sewers, so all property owners, tax exempt or not, will be assessed a monthly stormwater user fee. The Common Council adopted the following user fee structure:

- Residential User Fee: Developed residential property owners will be assessed a flat \$4 monthly user fee based on the average impervious surface of a residential parcel, or an Equivalent Residential Unit (ERU). One ERU equals 3,200 square feet. In January 2011, the fee will increase to \$5.
- Non-Residential Users: For developed non-residential property owners, the city will calculate user fees based on actual measured impervious surface for a parcel. The minimum bill will be one ERU or \$4. In January 2011, the minimum fee will increase to \$5.

Alternate rates are available to non-residential users that hold individual National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits for their stormwater discharges to watercourses inside or outside the city’s corporate boundaries.

The city will distribute stormwater user fee bills twice per year to residential and non-residential users beginning in 2010.

Stormwater entering and exiting the city’s storm sewers is regulated by the federal Clean Water Act and Indiana’s General Stormwater Permit Rule (Rule 13). In 1999, Lafayette was issued a joint NPDES Permit as a Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) by the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

The revenue generated by the user fees will fund individual and shared costs of the city’s MS4 Permit, annual operations and maintenance of the 200-mile plus stormwater conveyance system and nine stormwater capital improvement projects:

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| • Valley Street Drainage Improvements | • Durkees Run East Improvements |
| • Elliot Ditch Stream Bank Restoration | • Vinton Woods Detention Pond Rehabilitation Project |
| • South 30 th Street Drainage Improvements | • Orchard Heights Sanitary/Stormwater Improvements Project |
| • Rain Gardens and Rain Barrel Program | • Storm Sewer Outfall Repairs |
| • Armstrong Park Regional Detention Basin Retrofit | |

More information on the stormwater user fee and capital program is available at <http://www.lafayette.in.gov/departments/division.php?fDD=5-220> . Please call the engineer’s office at 765-807-1050 for additional information.